

DIME NOVEL ROUND-UP

A monthly magazine devoted to the collecting, preservation and literature of the old-time dime and nickel novels, libraries and popular story papers.

Vol. 35 No. 8

August 15, 1966

Whole No. 407

The Anatomy of Dime Novels

#5 The Firefighters

By J. Edward Leithead



DIME NOVEL SKETCHES NO. 80

BOYS HOME WEEKLY

The only black and white dime novel published during the colored cover era. The black and white illustration was bordered at top and bottom in yellow. 40 issues, May 17, 1911, to Feb. 14, 1912. Issued weekly. 32 pages, 8x10 inches. Contained reprints of Horatio Alger, Jr., stories and a few other popular boys authors such as Oliver Optic, Henty and Capt. Marryat.

The Anatomy of Dime Novels

#5 The Firefighters

By J. Edward Leithead

There were three types of dime novels in which Frank Tousey outran his chief competitor, Street & Smith: railroad stories, stories of the American Revolution and stories of boy firemen. You might say Civil War stories too, until you remember that Street & Smith's black-and-white War Library, totaled 413 issues, with a special double number, *Life and Military Services of General U. S. Grant*, by W. H. Van Orden (real name) making it 414, while Tousey's *Blue and Gray Weekly* ran to only 32 issues, although there were scattered issues of Civil War stories in other of his publications, notably *Pluck and Luck*.

We are concerned here with the stories of boy firemen. Street & Smith published a few fire stories in *Brave and Bold Weekly* and possibly elsewhere, but nothing to be compared with the number Tousey published in *Young Men of America*, *Golden Weekly*, *Boys of New York* and *Wide Awake Library*, afterward reprinting many of them in *Pluck and Luck*. Even the 72-issue *All Around Weekly* had a couple from some source.

These were stories of volunteer boy firemen, mostly in small towns, and using the old-style hand-operated pump engine, a hook and ladder truck, and a hose-carriage, none of them horse-drawn, the captain of the company running ahead, speaking trumpet in hand, to reach the fire in advance of the machines. Street & Smith published one in *Brave and Bold* No. 272 about a big city fire department, *Always on Duty*, or, *The Life of a New York Fireman*. I will mention this

again later. No. 159 was *The Young Fire Laddie*, but I do not have a copy to tell you more.

If it's "chills and thrills" you want they are not lacking in the color covers of these fire-fighting dime novels (and the black-and-whites, too, but the color illustration is so much more vivid). "Chills" at the awesome conflagrations depicted, nearly always a seething inferno — dwellings, barns, schools, factories, even a coal mine — and "thrills" at the courage of the smoke-eaters fighting to subdue the fire demon and, more often than not to save human life at the reckless risk of their own. Of all the forms of perishing, death by fire probably fills humanity with greater horror than any other. Therefore, the fireman, volunteer or professional, stands, with the policeman, in the forefront of guardians of life and property.

When I was a boy we lived not far from an engine-house. It was the day of horse-drawn fire trucks. The fire horses in their stalls at the rear of this fire-house (as we called it) were in full view from the wide doorways in front and a never-failing attraction to young and old. There were usually long periods between fires in those days, and when the horses were brought out to be walked up and down for exercise (blanketed in winter), people of the neighborhood collected to pat the animals, feed them halved apples or lump sugar or just stand to admire their clean-limbed beauty. I never knew one of those spirited horses to nip anyone.

At the sounding of the alarm gong,

DIME NOVEL ROUND-UP, Vol. 35, No. 8, Whole No. 407, August 15, 1966
Published monthly at 821 Vermont St., Lawrence, Kansas. Edited by Edward T. LeBlanc, 87 School St., Fall River, Mass. Second class postage paid at Lawrence, Kansas. Assistant Editor, Ralph F. Cummings, 161 Pleasant St., South Grafton, Mass. Subscription \$3.00 per year. Ad Rates—9c per word, \$1.50 per column inch; \$3.25 per quarter page, \$4.50 per half page and \$7.50 per page. Ads should be submitted by the 15th of the month in order to assure publication in the following month's issue.

the doors of the stalls would fly up and the well-trained horses came down the runway and pair off at the long hook and ladder truck, the nickel-plated steamer that looked like an outsize coffee urn with a smoke-stack and pumped the water when the hose-lines were hooked up to hydrants, the hose-carriage, with its reeled hose, coiled rope, life-net and fire-fighting tools, and the "fire chief's" light, one-horse vehicle. All the horses knew just where to stand for the collars, suspended from the ceiling, to be dropped in place without loss of time and the tugs hooked up, as firemen came sliding down poles from upstairs, donning helmets and rubber coats with a rush. They were already standing in rubber boots with the tops turned down.

The "chief" (who held the rank of lieutenant in the various fire companies stationed around the city) was first to hit the cobblestones with his long-maned-and-tailed horse going at full gallop, and an assistant on the seat beside him to keep the fire bell clanging and clear the way. Next the steamer would roar down the ramp with smoke wispings from the stack as fire was kindled in the firebox of the pumper. Two horses (sometimes a triple-hitch) to this heavy vehicle, and I remember a matching pair of white ones lunging into their collars as they cleared the ramp; tailed by the hose-carriage, which, in turn, was followed by the long hook and ladder, a truck requiring a special skill in handling to make the big swing around in mid-street, both by driver and wheel-man in the small seat behind the long ladders. The two-horse-hitch found its stride, getting purchase on the cobbles and striking sparks as their hoofs slithered. It looked as though the combined pull of these big animals would wrench the driver's arms out of the sockets. Helmeted figures were clustered on the running-boards on either side of the extension ladders, one keeping the gong going, just as the "second" men on the steamer and the hose-carriage were doing. Thus they raced away,

up the street or down or into a cross street, with the warning clangor of the fire bells preceding them and the horses' hoofs thundering like a cavalry charge. The "chief" was long since out of sight and sound.

You who have never seen horse-drawn engines leave a fire-house cannot imagine what it was like by watching motorized fire trucks roar forth today with sirens shrilling, although it is exciting—the magnificent straining, pounding horses galloping rhythmically made all the difference. It all comes back to me as I write this.

Once, however, the steamer from this same fire-house had an accident, to which I was an unexpected witness. The engine hadn't gone more than a long block, with the same white horses knocking sparks from the cobbles, when the off rear wheel — big and heavy — suddenly threw its hubcap, rolled across the street at an angle and crashed through the side window of a drug-store. The vehicle sagged down, dragging on the axle and spilling hot coals from the firebox. The horses tried to keep going in spite of this, nearly overturned the engine on the trolley tracks, but were finally halted. Nobody was hurt. The wheel had smashed the window and one end of a soda fountain. Damage enough, but could have been far worse. The steamer didn't get to that fire. One was sent out from another fire-house. I almost forgot to mention Spotty, the Dalmatian, who was the mascot at our fire-house and sometimes rode on the front seat with the driver of the hook and ladder, barking furiously as they rolled along. Coming back from a fire, Spotty hadn't a bark left in him. Trotting into the fire-house while the horses were being unhitched, he'd lie down under the alarm-box on the wall and pant as if he'd just finished the run, there and back, on foot. Somehow he never lost his balance on that high seat.

The following fire stories were published in *Young Men of America*:

#63-73 No. "6", or, The Young Fireman of Carbondale. By A. F. Hill.

Reprinted Pluck and Luck #111-920-1589.

#173-182 Liberty Hose, or, The Pride of Plattsville. By Frank Forrest. Reprinted Pluck and Luck #11-477-1278.

#392-398 Joe Jeckel, the Prince of Firemen. By Frank Forrest. Reprinted Pluck and Luck #99739-1524.

In Golden Weekly:

#23-31 High Ladder Harry, the Young Fireman of Freeport, or, Always at the Top. By Horace Appleton. Reprinted Pluck and Luck #279-1080.

In Boys of New York:

#64-72 The Boy Firemen, or, "Stand by the Machine," By Howard DeVere (Wm. H. Van Order). Reprinted Pluck and Luck #291-1092.

#267-274 Hook and Ladder No. 2. By Howard DeVere. Reprinted Pluck and Luck #228-1029.

#377-385 Hook and Ladder Jack, the Daring Young Fireman. By Robert Lennox. Reprinted Pluck and Luck #240-1041.

#394-403 Randy Rollins, the Young Fireman. A Story of Heroic Deeds. By Robert Lennox. Reprinted Pluck and Luck #325-1126.

#425-439 Frank Firm, the Young Fireman, or, Through Flame and Smoke. By Robert Lennox. Reprinted Pluck and Luck #1-451-1252.

#462-472 Fred Flame, the Brave Boy Fireman. By Robert Lennox. Reprinted Pluck and Luck #18-480-1291.

#515-522 Larry, the Life Saver, or, A Born Fireman. By Robert Lennox. Reprinted Pluck and Luck #309-1110.

#545-552 The American Boy Fireman, or, The Pride of the Volunteers. By Robert Lennox. Reprinted Pluck and Luck #27-008-1309.

#559-566 The Boy Volunteers, or, The Boss Fire Company of the Town. By Robert Lennox. Reprinted Pluck and Luck #33-500-1301.

#593-600 The Phantom Fireman, or, The Mystery of Mark Howland's Life. By Robert Lennox. Reprinted Pluck and Luck #50-563-1364.

#628-637 The Red Caps, or, The Fire Boys of Boylston. By Robert Lennox. Reprinted Pluck and Luck #53-693.

#659-664 A Fireman at 16. By Robert Lennox. Reprinted Pluck and Luck #62-519-1320.

#800-806 Resolute No. 10, or, The Boy Fire Company of Fulton. An Exciting Story of Fireman Life. By Robert Lennox. Reprinted Pluck and Luck #123-930-1599.

#827-834 Sam Spark, the Brave Young Fireman, or, Always the First on Hand. By Robert Lennox. Reprinted Pluck and Luck #185-906.

#842-849 Still Alarm Sam, the Daring Boy Fireman, or, Sure to Be on Hand. By Robert Lennox. Reprinted Pluck and Luck #204-1005.

#900-915 Harry Hook, the Boy Fireman of No. 1, or, Always at His Post. By Robert Lennox. Reprinted Pluck and Luck #252-1053.

#981-988 Wide Awake Will, the Plucky Boy Fireman of No. 3, or, Fighting the Flames for Fame and Fortune. By Robert Lennox. Reprinted Pluck and Luck #269-1070.

In Wide Awake Library:

#533 Fireman Dick, or, The Pride of Number Nine. By James D. Montague.

#708 Bound Together, or The Young Fire Laddie of Springdale. By Robert Lennox.

#719 Fire Bell Dick, or, The Rival Hook and Ladders. By R. Lennox.

#958 Rob Rounds, the Young Fireman. By C. Little.

#1153 Reprint of Boys of New York #394.

#1158 Reprint of Boys of New York #377-385.

#1336 The Fire Bugs of Chicago. By James D. Montague.

#1343 Reprint of Boys of New York #267-274.

In Pluck and Luck:

Issues of this color cover weekly in which were reprinted boy firemen numbers from Young Men of America, Golden Weekly, Boy of New York have already been noted. In the black-and-white issues most of these were signed "Robert Lennox," an evident nom. The same titles repeated in Pluck and Luck were signed "Ex-Fire-Chief Warden," also a nom. About the only known author of these fire-

men stories was "Howard DeVere," real name Wm. H. Van Orden. It seems quite possible, as Mr. LeBlanc suggests, "that a number of the Tousey staff wrote under the pen names 'Robert Lennox' and 'Ex-Fire-Chief Warden.'" The following titles in Pluck and Luck are reprints from Happy Days except where noted. All were signed Ex-Fire-Chief Warden:

403—Mazeppa No. 2, the Boy Fire Company of Carlton, or, Plucky Work on Ladder and Line.

421—Edgewood No. 2, or, The Only Boy in the Fire Company.

431—Through Smoke and Flame, or, The Rival Firemen of Irvington.

445—Fearless Frank, the Brave Boy Fireman, and How He Won His Fame.

451—Dick Decker, the Brave Young Fireman. Reprint of Boys of New York 425-439.

490—Reprint of Boys of New York #462-472.

500—Reprint of Boys of New York #559-566.

508—Reprint of Boys of New York #545-552.

519—Reprint of Boys of New York #659-664.

533—Phil, the Boy Fireman, or, Through Flames to Victory.

539—Columbia, or, The Young Firemen of Glendale.

563—Reprint of Boys of New York #593-600.

589—Washington No. 1, or The Fire Boys of Graydon.

598—The Ready Reds, or, The Fire Boys of Fairfax.

693—Reprint of Boys of New York #628-637.

739—Reprint of Young Men of America #392-398.

Wide Awake Weekly

This color cover weekly started publication April 20, 1906, with "stories of adventure on a great variety of subjects." Evidently, in competition with Pluck and Luck and Fame and Fortune, it didn't do too well, for, with No. 37 began a long run of fire stories by "Robert Lennox," the first one dated December 28, 1906, and titled

37—Volunteer Fred, or, From Fire-

man to Chief. The cover illustration shows the tops of two buildings, separated by a narrow street or a wide alley, in the foreground, one on fire. A young woman, the mother of two boys in the picture, stands at the edge of the burning roof, watching the slow progress of her small sons, the smallest on the back of the larger, crossing between the buildings on a flag-pole, laid horizontally, which Volunteer Fred has chopped from its base with a fire-axe and is holding steady on the roof of the unfired building. Gesticulating spectators are grouped on a distant roof. **Caption:** "'Come on, now! You see how easy it is!' cheered Volunteer Fred, but his heart thumped suffocatingly. If he lost these brave little fellows he would feel like a murderer. 'And I'll die sooner than leave their mother there!' he quivered."

38—Neptune No. 1, or, The Volunteer Boys of Blackton. The cover illustration shows a three-story building afire on the first floor. In a third floor window a young mother and a little girl are ready to jump but there is no life-net. Instead one fireman is heaving a rope at the high window while others of the helmeted, red-shirted fire company work a hand-pump engine and a nozzleman directs a stream of water on the lower floor. **Caption:** "'Catch for your lives!' roared Foreman Dick over all the crackle, throb and din. Straight and true he sent that old friendly rope to the mother at the window. 'Make fast! I'm coming up!' cheered Dick. 'If I can live there! he gritted.' (That is an asbestos rope, by the way).

39—Hook, Ladder and Pike, or, The Life-savers of Freehold. The cover illustration shows a burning building resembling a factory, with dwellings on a side street visible at the right. The factory walls are crumbling, the firemen running; one has tripped and a companion is trying to drag him to his feet. **Caption:** "'Run for your very lives!' roared Foreman Benson, leading the mad flight. Crash! Down came the walls, sending up a volcano of flame and stifling fumes. 'I won't de-

sert a helpless comrade!' gritted Tip Marston. The fiery avalanche caught them both."

40—Columbia's Pet, or, A Fireman at 17. (I have no copy of this).

This notice appeared on the back cover of No. 41:

"Beginning with No. 41 this weekly will contain a new series of magnificent fire stories by Robert Lennox, the best author of this class of fiction in the world. They detail the exciting adventures of a company of gallant young fire-fighters, under the leadership of a brave boy known as Young Wide Awake. Their daring deeds of heroism, and the perils they overcome, are intensely interesting. These stories are not confined entirely to fire-fighting, but also contain many interesting incidents, humorous situations and a little of the love element. There is a charming girl in the stories whom you will all like very much."

I have little doubt that this was written by Lu Senarens, then editor of these Tousey weeklies. He may even have written some of the stories.

41—Young Wide Awake, or, The Fire Boys of Belmont. The cover illustration shows Young Wide Awake with one arm supporting his sweetheart, Kitty Lester, clinging to a window frame of a dwelling, through which long tongues of flame are shooting. The ladder by which he hoped to descend with the girl has burned in half and the nozzleman of the Belmont Fire Co. has turned the full pressure of the water from the hand-pumper on the imperilled pair. The pumper, the hook and ladder, and the hose-carriage, all hand-drawn apparatus, are visible in the street. Caption: "As the burning ladder broke, and Young Wide Awake's mighty effort swung Kitty to safety on the window ledge, both gazed shudderingly at the sheet of flame below. 'We can't escape now!' gasped the girl. 'We can and will!' Young Wide Awake staunchly retorted."

The first story of the new series opened with a "Cast of Characters," something I've never seen before in dime novels except some Bowery Boy

Library numbers and Diamond Dick, Jr. Weeklies above No. 615 or thereabouts. Here it is:

"Dick Halstead — 'Young Wide Awake,' 17 years old, a good all-around athlete. Dark-brown hair, frank blue eyes, a good-looking boy and a bit fastidious about his appearance. Captain of the boys' fire company.

"Joe Darrell — 18, one of Young Wide Awake's friends; a great sprinter. He is also a crack boxer, and is hot-headed enough to be in frequent need of this accomplishment.

"Terry Rourke — Young Wide Awake's chum. Irish and with 'sun-kissed' hair, 16 years old. A stocky bit of a lad, always aching for a scrap when the cause is a good one.

"Hal Norton—17, blonde-haired and with blue eyes; one of the thoughtful boys and a bit of a dreamer. Lieutenant of Young Wide Awake's fire company.

"Ted Lester — 14 years old and slight of build. The youngest of the boy firemen.

"Sam Bangs—Generally called 'Slam Bangs' on account of his clumsy, blundering propensities; 16 years old, and always hungry. A staunch friend of Dick.

"George Parsons—Middle-aged man. Has a monopoly of the local fire insurance business.

"Fred Parsons—18, tall, slender and very dudish. He is Dick's rival for Kitty Lester, and an all-around thorn in Young Wide Awake's side.

"James Pelton—Big, broad, black-wiskered, middle-aged man. Local chief of the fire department.

"Hugh Davis—Man of thirty-five. Captain of Torrent No. 1, the men's fire company.

"Ellis Thornton—Mayor of Belmont.

"Jason Sharp — Middle-aged with bristly gray mustache and grizzled hair. Belmont's chief of police, and a policeman all the way through.

"Kitty Lester—Young Wide Awake's sweetheart; 17 years old, of good figure, black hair and snapping dark-brown eyes. Is the daughter of wealthy parents.

"Faith Vane—16, short, plump, blue-

eyed and having light-brown hair. She has a rich sense of the humorous, and is very partial to Terry. She is Kitty's most intimate friend."

Not mentioned here is the fact Fred Parsons was captain of a rival volunteer fire company, Neptune, with which the Washington No. 1, Wide's company, sometimes clashed. Also, a small orphan boy called "Skip" because his real name was unknown, showed up in the course of the series. He was a mascot of Washington No. 1. So, also, was "Trot," the Dalmatian coach dog, who lived at the engine-house.

42—Young Wide Awake's Biggest Blaze, or, Saving a Burning City. (Where description of cover illustration is lacking, means I have no copy).

43—Young Wide Awake's Life Line, or, The Narrowest Escape on Record.

44—Young Wide Awake's Hook and Ladder Work, or, The Maniac Fire Fiend of Belmont. The cover illustration shows a room in which the carpet is afire. A young man, not a fireman, his arms tied, is backed against a closet door, and facing him with a flaring spill made from a folded newspaper, is the "maniac fire fiend." Coming up a ladder against the outer wall, Young Wide Awake is entering by the open window, carrying a hook. One of his fire company crew is on the ladder behind him. **Caption:** "Brad stood tied to the door, paralyzed with fright. 'I'll give ye a taste of what fire's like!' roared the maniac, thrusting the blazing torch close. 'We've got the fire fiend at last!' roared Young Wide Awake, bursting in through the window."

45—Young Wide Awake's Bucket Brigade, or, Trapping a Fire-bug. The cover illustration shows a smoking frame building—the fire is out—with a high board fence along an alley. Down this alleyway, past the fence, a man is running, to be deluged with streams of water from the fire buckets of Wide and Hal, his lieutenant, atop the fence. The dog mascot and some young firemen are in pursuit of the water-blinded fire-bug. **Caption:**

"With Joe, Terry and Trot close at his heels, the firebug dashed down the alley. 'We'll put the fire out for him!' thundered Young Wide Awake. Hal soused the wretch, but Wide dropped bucket and water together on his head."

46—Young Wide Awake Smoke-Bound, or, Daring Work With the Life Net.

47—Young Wide Awake's Pikemen, or, Hemmed In by Smoke and Flame.

48—Young Wide Awake's Scaling Ladders, or, The Boy Life-saver's Greatest Victory.

49—Young Wide Awake's Fire Line, or, A Boy Fireman's Nerve in Mid-air.

50—Young Wide Awake's Axe Brigade, or, Hewing His Way to a Fire's Heart.

51—Young Wide Awake's Still Alarm, or, At Bay With Blazing Oil.

52—Young Wide Awake's Nozzleman Grit, or, The Midnight Call from Box 14. The cover illustration shows fire inside a warehouse owned by a man who also owns a powder works elsewhere; but here, in a vault, are stored 100 kegs of gunpowder and the Washington No. 1 fire-fighters are carrying them out while their captain, Wide, acts as nozzleman, playing a stream of water on the blaze. **Caption:** "'How many more?' yelled Young Wide Awake, as, with head down, he bucked against that skin-parching heat and the strangling hot clouds. 'Twenty!' clicked Terry. 'Hustle!' urged Wide. 'Get the last powder keg out! I'll hold out if I can!'"

53—Young Wide Awake's Champion Climber, or, Fighting the Flames Without Water.

54—Young Wide Awake's Fire Mask, or, Life Saving at Red Heat.

55—Young Wide Awake's Hose Carriage Dash, or, The Belmont Boys' Best Run.

56—Young Wide Awake's Hand Grenades, or, Cut Off by the Flame Demon. Cover illustration shows hallway of a school, with small children, boys and girls, clustered about the teacher. Wide has just opened a door through which pour smoke and flame

—apparently they are cut off from a stairway. Wide has a grenade in one hand, two more in a wire-carrier, ready to hurl at the fire. **Caption:** "Don't despair! There's a way out of here—must be!" cried Wide, as he hurled the hand grenade into that flaming volcano of a doorway. The children huddled against the terrified teacher. Young Wide Awake prayed—for what seemed impossible!"

57—Young Wide Awake and the Rival Fire Boys, or, Fighting for Honors.

58—Young Wide Awake's Dynamite Crew, or, Blowing Up a Burning Village.

59—Young Wide Awake's Fire Test, or, The Belmont Boys' Greatest Stroke.

60—Young Wide Awake's Fire Patrol, or, Running Down a Desperate Gang.

61—Young Wide Awake's Longest Leap, or, Swift Work With the Lifelines.

62—Young Wide Awake's Signal Call, or, Fire Fighting to the Last Ditch.

63—Young Wide Awake's Cascade of Flame, or, Within an Inch of Fiery Death.

64—Young Wide Awake's Fire Fight or, Holding Up the Belmont Lifesavers.

65—Young Wide Awake's Bravest Rescue, or, Snatching Victims from Death's Jaws. Cover illustration shows the front of a burning building, close up, lurid flames coming from two windows, coils of smoke from a third in which is framed a middle-aged man, holding desperately to the booted leg of Wide. The Captain of Washington No. 1 is one of a two-man human chain—Terry is the other—lowered from an iron balcony above the flames by two other young firemen, Hal and Joe. They are about to pull the elderly man through the smoke-wreathed window before it bursts into flame. **Caption:** "Catch hold of my leg. We'll get you out of this, or go down together!" cheered Wide, as Hal and Joe swung Terry and himself, pendulum fashion, toward the terrified fire victim. It was a deed of appalling peril,

in the jaws of death!"

66—Young Wide Awake's Junior Firemen, or, Skip and Ted at Their Best.

67—Young Wide Awake's Big Reward, or, Caught in a Blazing Wreck.

68—Young Wide Awake's Powder Mill Blaze, or, Breaking Through a Wall of Flame.

69—Young Wide Awake and the Fire Queen, or, At the Mercy of a Fiend.

70—Young Wide Awake's Battle With Neptune No. 2, or, The Mean Trick of Rivals.

71—Young Wide Awake's Lightning Truck Work, or, Daring Death With Ladders.

72—Young Wide Awake's Steeple Blaze, or, The Hardest Work of All.

73—Young Wide Awake and the "Fire Flies," or, Winning a Losing Fight.

74—Young Wide Awake's Ladder Rush, or, The Crack Work of Washington No. 1.

75—Young Wide Awake's General Alarm, or, Meeting the Neptunes on Their Own Ground.

76—Young Wide Awake's Mascot Chum, or, Terry Rourke's Brave Deed.

77—Young Wide Awake and the Train Wreck, or, Saving Life at Wholesale.

78—Young Wide Awake's Clean Victory, or, Fighting Fire to the Limit.

79—Young Wide Awake Above the Flames, or, Through a Roasting Ordeal.

80—Young Wide Awake in Danger, or, Baffled by a Firebug.

81—Young Wide Awake's Daring Deed, or, The Last Chance for Life.

82—Young Wide Awake's Factory Fire, or, Caught in a Death Trap.

83—Young Wide Awake's Rope Crew, or, The Belmont Fire Boys' Pluck.

84—Young Wide Awake and the Maniac, or, After the Insurance Crooks.

85—Young Wide Awake's False Alarm, or, The Fire Captain's Narrowest Escape.

86—Young Wide Awake's Mysterious Fire, or, Almost at Death's Door.

87—Young Wide Awake Over a Volcano, or, The Trick of the Mad Chemist.

88—Young Wide Awake and the Frozen Hydrants, or, Fire-fighting in a Blizzard.

89—Young Wide Awake's Well Won Medal, or, Winning Fire Department Honors.

90—Young Wide Awake's Call for Help, or, Shut Off from His Comrades

91—Young Wide Awake at the Firemen's Ball, or, Parading in the Face of Death.

92—Young Wide Awake's Daring Dive, or, Hot Work at a Mill Fire.

(to be continued)

EXCERPTS FROM LETTERS TO THE EDITORS

Dear Ed: I like to read plenty of members' letters in Roundup. Also Old Reckless Ralph's column, I miss. Don't care much for long articles with large sections of dime novels quoted.—Ed J. McNabb, Brooklyn, N. Y. (Thanks for your comments. Let's hear from other members regarding their likes and dislikes in the Roundup).

Dear Ed: I just received word that Fred Lee of Indianapolis, Ind., died June 25, 1966. His sister wrote me to that effect. As you know Fred has been a member of the Roundup for over 30 years. He was diabetic and lost both legs about 5 years ago and was in a wheel chair ever since. He still carried on his hobby of collecting novels. Fred was one of the first that I had any dealings with. I sure will miss him. I found him to be a real nice guy.—Charles F. Westbrook, Spokane, Wash. (I, too, will miss Fred and his long list of items to trade or sell.)

Dear Ed: Here is an item which may prove of interest to you and other members. On one of my first visits to the New York World's Fair I viewed a group of paintings in the U. S. Pavilion. It was a very interesting display and seemed to follow the course of American history from Revolutionary times to the near pres-

ent. Of those paintings I can recall in historical order were Paul Revere's Ride, Betsy Ross, Civil War scenes, The Old West, First World War, General Pershing, Second World War. Also there were such theatrical figures as George M. Cohan on stage and George Gershwin at the piano; and lo! and behold! a large portrait in color of Horatio Alger. I got a big kick out of studying the paintings.—Edward J. McNabb, Brooklyn, N. Y. (Ed. note. Anyone know the whereabouts of the Horatio Alger painting now?)

Dear Mr. Leithead: I want to thank you on behalf of the Horatio Alger Society, as well as for the Wayside Press, the publisher, for your nice mention in the June issue of the Roundup of Ralph Gardner's book, "Horatio Alger, or The American Hero Era." Your words of praise for Mr. Gardner's book are appreciated and your reference to it helps of course to increase interest in this author and incidentally in our society. Though we began informally in 1961, we incorporated last year and our growth has been very healthy. From a group of 50 a year ago we have grown to 104 at this writing and adding new members every week. I have been a reader of the Roundup for several years and find your articles interesting. This one, on the hero fiction stories becoming collector's items, is especially interesting.—Horatio Alger Society, Kenneth B. Butler, President.

BUYING

Baseball and Football tickets, programs, games.

John Sullivan

3748 North Damen, Chicago 60618

MERRIWELL STORIES in TIP TOP WEEKLY BOUGHT & SOLD

Stories of Frank & Dick Merriwell, and Tip Top Weekly, are my specialty. Have hundreds in good condition at reasonable prices. Send want list.

GUINON, Box 214, Little Rock, Ark.

A DIME NOVEL READER'S SCRAP BOOK

FROM TIP TOP WEEKLY #532,

June 23, 1906

"Frank Merriwell's House Party; or,
The Rustle with the Rovers"

Honk! honk! honk!

Frank glanced over his shoulder.

"Automobile coming Bart," he said.

"She's raising a cloud of dust. Better give her plenty of room."

Frank and Bart were out for a morning horseback ride through the country. After a dash of an hour or more, they had turned back and were now in sight of Farnham Hall and Merry Home.

Bart's mount began to dance and lunge.

"Whoa, Pansy—whoa, lady," he said soothingly. "She doesn't fancy buzz-wagons a great deal, Merry."

"She never did," replied Frank, "but she'll get used to them. They're growing thicker every day. I've ordered one myself."

"Honk! honk! honk!" sounded the automobile horn close behind them.

With a purring of valves, a soft panting from the exhaust, and a whirl of wheels, a huge red machine flew past them in a cloud of dust.

"Forty miles an hour," said Hodge, blinking his eyes and turning his capbrim down to the cloud of dust. "That's some speed for these roads, Merry."

"And I'll guarantee they'll go through town like that," returned Frank. "Whew! Some of these machines ought to have a sprinkler attachment."

"They're stopping," said Bart. "By George! they're turning into your place. Did you know any one in the car?"

"Got only a glimpse of them, and they seemed to be strangers to me."

"That's a flyer they have. What make is it, do you know?"

"It's a French machine, I believe. It looks to me like a Mercedes."

"Are you going to have an imported machine, Frank?"

"Oh, no. I'm satisfied with the best American makes. A good American

machine is better adapted for our roads than any of the crack foreigners."

"How do you make that out?"

"It's simple enough. In France they have grand roads everywhere. Their machines are made for such roads, and on such roads they can fairly fly. In this country we have a few fairly good roads, but the majority of our highways are wretchedly bad. The American makes have built machines adapted for such roads, and on these roads our better-made motor-cars are superior to anything we can bring across the water."

"But I understand that most of the American machines are fakes. I've been told they are far from perfect."

Frank laughed.

"The perfect automobile has not been made, and I doubt if it ever will be," he answered. "The honest American manufacturers who know their business are making honest machines. It's true that there are a host of fakers in the business. It's true that nearly seventy-five per cent of the machines turned out at the present time are built for the sole purpose of making money for the manufacturers. The American public has not yet been educated to the point of discerning between the fake and the honest article. Nevertheless they're learning mighty fast, and within a very few years the fakers are bound to reach the end of their ropes and go to the wall. Unless they change their methods, five years from now one-third of the concerns now doing business will no longer be in the field. Ten years from now a half of the present manufacturers will be out of it."

"That sounds a little pessimistical for you."

"Oh, no, Bart; it's optimistical. I'm confident that the sharks and sharpers will fail and the honest concerns will endure and prosper. The automobile has come to stay. There is no question about that. The majority of the present day buyers are going to be defrauded, and many of them will become disgusted. In purchasing a

machine I've not relied on my own judgment, but I've sought the advice of friends who were competent to advise. I hope and I believe that I've got my money's worth. Here we are, and there are the gentlemen of the red bubble talking with some of the fellows."

(Gilbert Patten, the author of the above, sure had the future of the automobile industry correctly pegged.)

NEWS NOTE

The Horatio Alger Society honored the memory of Horatio Alger, Jr., on the occasion of the 67th anniversary of his death. Members of the society met at the home of Max Goldberg, regional director of the Society and motored to Alger's grave site in Glenwood Cemetery in South Natick, Mass. Judge Daniel J. Gillen of the Boston Municipal Court gave an excellent presentation lauding Alger and his books. Rev. Donald Nelson of Natick gave the invocation. Other members of the society present were Steve Press of Mt. Vernon, N. Y., Roy Wendell of Medford, Mass., Ed Levy of New Haven, Conn., Forrest Campbell, editor of the Newsboy, the official publication of the Society and Edward Reynolds of Thorndike, Mass.

DIME NOVEL COLLECTORS' BOOK SHELF

EXPLORERS OF THE INFINITE, Shapers of Science Fiction, by Sam Moskowitz. The World Publishing Co., 2231 West 110th St., Cleveland, Ohio.

Meridian Books M202, 354 pages, paper bound \$1.95. This is a reissue of the earlier cloth bound edition. Excellent for science-fiction fans. A chapter is devoted to the works of Lu Senarens of dime novel fame, author of Frank Reade and Jack Wright.

Back numbers Reckless Ralph's Dime Novel Roundup, Nos. 1 to 237, some reprints, 12 for \$1.00 or all for \$21. Sent postpaid. You also get Dime Novel Catalogue, Birthday No. 2, indexes, #1 Pioneer and Scouts of the West.

Can you beat it?

Ralph F. Cummings

161 Pleasant St.

So. Grafton, Mass. 01560

FOR SALE

1 Volume Boys Star Library containing 6 rare Jack Wright Invention stories Nos. 336 354 356 359 361, good, \$25.00.

Boys Star Library Nos. 283 266 321 331 346 333, some stains, printed on rag paper, \$3.00 each.

Detective Library Nos. 792 711 707 687 734 666 736. James Boys stories, good, \$4 each.

James Boys Weekly No. 55, beautiful, brilliant, not cut, \$8.

Novels guaranteed satisfactory or money refunded. No orders accepted for less than \$12.00.

ROY E. MORRIS

901 E. Michigan

Orlando, Fla. 32806

MEMBERSHIP CHANGES

- 258. Richard Leekley, Box 337, Winthrop Harbor, Ill. 60096 (New member)
- 103. Tom Moriarty, 179-24 149th Road, Jamaica, N. Y. 11434 (New Address)
- 259. F. Lisle McCormick, P. O. Box 134, Ogdensburg, N. Y. 13669 (New mem.)
- 260. Acquisitions Dept. Univ. of Pennsylvania Liby., Philadelphia, Pa. 19104 (New member)
- 261. University of Louisville Liby., Belknap Campus, Louisville, Ky. 40208 (New member)
- 262. Portland State College Library, P. O. Box 1151, Portland, Ore. 97207 (New member)
- 263. Florida State Univ. Liby., Tallahassee, Florida 32306 (New member)

BACK ISSUES OF DIME NOVEL ROUND UP FOR SALE

- Nos. 238 through 375 15c each or \$1.50 per volume (12 consecutive numbers). Nos. 376 to current issue 30c each or \$3.00 per volume.
- | | |
|--|--|
| 238 Dawley's Camp & Fireside Liby. | 272 The Greatest Sleuth That Ever Lived |
| 239 Old Slob's Detective Library | 273 The Gentleman's Journal |
| 240 Boy Detectives Part I | 274 Ye Brotherhood, the Round-up and Its Editor |
| 241 Boy Detectives Part II | 275 The Civil War in Dime Novels |
| 242 Rovers of the Sea | 276 The Bandit Brothers of Old Missouri |
| 243 Hospitality on the Range | 277 James Perkins Tracy, "A Self Made Man" |
| 244 Snaps, the Comic Weekly | 278 The Northfield Bank Robbery |
| 245 More about Nick Carter Librys. | 279 The Rival Rangers of Fleet St. |
| 246 Buckskin Men of Forest and Plain, Part I | 280 The James Boys in the Saddle Again |
| 247 Is Interest in Dime Novels Dying? | 281 Carl Linville |
| 248 Buckskin Men of Forest and Plain, Part II | 282 The Fiction Factory |
| 249 Buckskin Men of Forest and Plain, Part III | 283 James Boys in the Saddle Again, Conclusion |
| 250 Buckskin Men of Forest and Plain, Part IV | 284 Dewey Miller |
| 251 Jack Harkaway | 285 Upton Sinclair, Last of the Dime Novelists |
| 252 Charlie Miller, the Last of the Pony Express Riders | 286 The Old Werner Publishing Co. |
| 253 Buckskin Men of Forest and Plain, Part V | 287 Fond Recollections |
| 254 Buckskin Men of Forest and Plain, Part VI | 288 My Remembrances of Gilbert Patten |
| 255 A Two-Gun Bluff | 289 Outlaw Trails in Indian Territory |
| 256 Membership List | 290 Rootin Tootin Shootin Frisco Bert |
| 257 Old Melodramas | 291 Buckskin Bill Recalls Famous Iowa Neighbors and a Trip to Old Missouri |
| 258 Young Klondike | 292 Membership List |
| 259 The Horatio Alger Paperback First Editions | 293 The Frank Tousey Authors. |
| 260 Early Bicycling Days | 294 Wyoming's Wild Riders and Other Hunted Men |
| 261 Charles Asbury Stephens | 295 The Title was the Same |
| 262 Charles Asbury Stephens, Concl. | 296 Cecil Burleigh, One of the Comic Writers |
| 263 Boys Books of Capt. F. S. Brereton | 297 Four Footed Friends of Our Dime Novel Heroes |
| 264 The Wild West Shows Pass in Grand Review | 298 Oliver Optic |
| 265 The Wild West Shows Pass in Grand Review, Conclusion | 299 Check List of S&S Publications |
| 266 The Pseudonyms of Edward S. Ellis | 300 William Wallace Cook |
| 267 The Pseudonyms of Edward S. Ellis, Part II | 301 Tales of Klondike Gold in Dime Novels |
| 268 The Pseudonyms of Edward S. Ellis, Part III | 302 Up to Date History in Happy Days |
| 269 Membership list | 303 Alfred Bronaugh Taylor, A Beadle Author |
| 270 The Buckskin Bill Story | 304 The Rockspur Series |
| 271 Reprints of the Merriwell Stories | 305 Edward Stratemeyer |
| | 306 Boys of New York |
| | 307 Pseudonyms of Edward S. Ellis, Part I |